

Arrangements for Occupational Health Surveillance

Occupational Health and Surveillance Arrangements

Premier Technical Services Group PLC and its constituent companies [the company] recognises that occupational health is concerned with the prevention, monitoring and treatment of work-related disease and ill-health. It covers a broad range of health-related issues, including:

- Effect of work on health – both acute and chronic;
- Prevention of occupational disease or its worsening, for example through health surveillance, ergonomics and good management systems;
- Use of rehabilitation and recovery programmes for those returning to work;
- Help for disabled persons at work, for example through provision of support or workplace adaptations;
- Provision of advice on occupational aspects of ill-health with complex causation, such as stress

Occupational Health Hazards

Health hazards can be:

- Biological – exposure to bacteria and viruses can lead to transmission of disease to humans i.e. anthrax, hepatitis, Weils disease (leptospirosis);
- Chemical – exposure to certain chemicals can cause various illnesses or conditions i.e. intoxication, allergy, asthma, cancer;
- Musculoskeletal – conditions affecting the body which may arise from poor manual handling techniques, repetitive movements.
- Physical – exposure to agents such as noise, vibration, extremes of temperature, radiation;
- Psychosocial – affecting mental and physical health (stress). May be caused by excessive work pressures, bullying or racism, redeployment, redundancy

The role of occupational health professionals involves identifying, monitoring, eliminating, preventing and managing the risks arising from these activities.

Benefits of Occupational Health Services

- The workforce is healthy;
- Employees are protected while they are in work;
- Gives an opportunity to provide more training in safety and healthier working practices i.e. use of PPE, manual handling etc;
- Employees have the chance to raise any health concerns they may have in confidence;
- Keeps sickness absence and its related costs at a minimum;
- Checks how control measures are working and identifies areas where further action is required.

The costs of occupational ill-health can be vast and encompass the following:
Costs to Employers include:-

Loss of business and disrupted schedules;
Loss of skills and knowledge, through individuals leaving the workforce due to ill-health;
Recruitment and training of replacement workers;
Rehabilitation and return to work arrangements;
Time spent investigating incidents;
Sick pay;
Increase in insurance payments;
Fines and compensation claims.

Occupational Health Services

The following activities fall within the scope of occupational health and safety:

Periodic medical examinations, including health surveillance – these may be due to statutory requirements, or where it is perceived that staff are exposed to specific hazards i.e. noise, HAVS or radiation.

Sickness absence monitoring & post sickness absence review – recording and monitoring of employee sickness will help to identify and trends or patterns of sickness in the workplace

Post Sickness-absence Review

Following long-term sickness absence, review may be conducted to see if individuals remain fit enough to carry out their current roles. This should provide the employee with the opportunity to discuss any continuing health concerns they may have. It may also highlight any further issues, such as a disability or sensitivity, that warrant a change in the workplace access arrangements, or exposure to specific individuals or levels of work pressure.

If the returning employee's health indicates changes to the work environment, procedures or hours worked, it is beneficial to provide their work colleagues with awareness training or instruction.

Immunisation

Some employers provide staff with immunisations if they travel abroad in their job role. Foreign travel health requirements can vary, and so it is recommended that clinical advice be sought before travelling to exotic locations. Other immunisations with potential work-related dimensions include TB, tetanus, hepatitis, rabies and influenza.

Counselling

Many organisations now provide a confidential counselling service to staff, often via a permanent health insurance scheme.

Health Education

Information on diets, smoking, drugs, alcohol or sex education may be provided by occupational health services, in an effort to educate the workforce how to reduce the risk of ill-health. (separate Guidance notes are available on Smoking and Drugs & Alcohol at work).

Treatments

Various occupational health providers offer special treatments to staff, such as physiotherapy, chiropody, reflexology or dentistry.

Rehabilitation

The principal aim of rehabilitation is to return staff who has suffered ill health, injury or the onset of disability to their original job or other productive work. Rehabilitation may involve changes to work practices, hours or the provision of specially adapted equipment, services or of the working environment itself.

COMPANY MEDICAL PROVIDERS ADDRESSES

1. **Aviva**
PO BOX 540
Eastleigh, SO50 0ET
0800 046 2009
2. **Express Medicals Ltd**
Suite 8
City Business Centre
Lower Road
London
SE16 2XB
020 7394 1788
3. **BUPA**
BUPA House
15-19 Bloomsbury Way
London
WC1A 2BA
0845 600 2548
4. **Medicentre**
134 Lower Marsh Road
London
SE1 7AE
0207 510 0305
5. **Meditest Screening**
The Old School
Storndon Road
Ongar
Essex
CM5 9RG
01277 373970
6. **Medicals Direct**
Bridge Clinic
7 -9 The Bridge

Wealdstone
Harrow
Middlesex
HA3 5AB
0207 427 6509

7. **Duradiamond Healthcare Limited**
134 Harley Street
London
W1G 7GY
0207 884 9187

8. **Ealing Independant Family Practice**
38C Mount Avenue
Ealing
W5 2QJ
0208 810 7977

9. **Woodgrange Medical Practice**
40 Woodgrange Road
Forest Gate
London
E7 0QH
0208 221 3100

10. **Health Care Connections**
c/o Network Rail HQ
40 Melton Street
London
NW1 2EE
08456 773002

11. **Executive and Occupational Medical Centres**
3rd Floor,
5 Watling Gate
297-303 Edgware Road,
London
NW9 6NB
020 8455 5336

Alcohol and Drugs

The company operates a zero tolerance to drugs and (up to a limit of 20mg/ml BAC) alcohol. Any employee, (contractor or person engaged to work directly or indirectly,) reporting for duty, either under the influence of drugs or substances, or having consumed drugs before work or on the premises, or with an alcohol level above that accepted by the company is in breach of company policy.

Failure to comply with the terms of the drug and alcohol policy is considered gross misconduct and will initiate disciplinary action and may lead to dismissal.

A. General Procedures

If an employee reporting for work is visibly impaired or unable to properly perform required duties because of alcohol or illegal drug use, they will not be allowed to work.

B. Employee Drug and Alcohol Abuse Testing

Drug testing will take place under random, with cause or with suspicion criteria's **Random** screening may involve a percentage of the workforce each month.

With Cause screening is when any incident is reported to the company and requires a drug screen or possibly directly to a urine screen as the company sees fit.

With Suspicion screening takes place because a suspicion has arisen and the company has to eliminate the possibility of drugs or alcohol.

All safety critical employees will be subject to drug and alcohol screening.

All screening and testing will be performed in a confidential and discreet manner to respect employee confidentiality. Drug testing will be by an on site drug wipe screen on the skin and/or in saliva performed by a trained screener and any positives will be confirmed by taking a further sample for examination at a fully accredited laboratory.

If a negative is seen at the point of drug screening, the result is recorded and the employee returns to duty.

If a positive is seen at the point of drug screening, the employee is notified of the positive result and explained that the next step is to provide a sample for confirmation purposes. There is absolutely no guilt attached at this point as it is only a positive to a screening test.

Failure to participate in, provide a sample or attempts to pervert the results of a screen or confirmation sample will be seen by the company as a serious case of gross misconduct. The disciplinary procedure sees this as likely to cause immediate termination of employment.

The external consultant confirmation sample collector will attend and secure a place to take the sample. The paper work will require proof of identity of the employee and a confidential history of any medication or over the counter preparations taken in the last seven days.

Collection for each different type of confirmation sample will be to the current workplace testing standards. In the likely case of a urine sample being required, the employee is to remove any outer clothing such as jackets and coats, and to turn out their pockets. They will not be allowed any bags and will have to wash their hands and have them inspected. They will then provide a urine sample which will be examined for integrity and tested for temperature before being split into the A and B sample. From this point all information is bar coded and confidential within a full chain of custody process.

After providing the sample, the employee will be sent home on full pay until the result is back from the laboratory. The employee will be notified of the result in a period of approximately five working days.

Witness for both sides may be present for the screen or for the confirmation sampling. Waiting for a particular person who may not be on shift or at a different location is not acceptable and will be considered as an attempt to pervert the sample process.

The employee may submit information to explaining or contesting the test results, and why the results do not constitute a violation of the company policy. The employee who has provided the specimen shall be permitted by the company to have a portion of the specimen retested, at the employee expense, at a laboratory, which must be licensed and approved by the relevant authorities. The second laboratory must test at equal or greater sensitivity for the drug in question.

If the shift or working day has ended, the employee (and trained screener) will remain until the sample collection procedure is satisfactorily completed.

In certain situations like With Cause or With Suspicion, it may be necessary, as deemed by the company, to move directly to a laboratory confirmation method without a screening test being performed. The method of confirmation is open and at the discretion of the company.

Testing positive will be dealt with through a formal hearing as per the company disciplinary procedures, if upheld, the outcome will be (anything from) immediate dismissal (through second chance but closely monitored by further testing, or to a rehabilitation course with counselling and further intense screening). The decision not to terminate employment will be that of the Managing Director

Alcohol Policy

The company defines the consumption of/being under the influence of alcohol as being in excess of either 20mg/ml BAC (20 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood (blood alcohol content BAC)). For your information the UK drink drive law has a limit of 80mg/ml BAC.

Alcohol will be screened for with a breath alcohol device and if this shows positive, a second reading will be taken after a 20 minute interval. The screening will be performed by a suitably trained member of staff with a company owned and

calibrated instrument or an external contractor will be called to take the two samples using their calibrated automated breathalyser.

The consequences of failing the alcohol test will instigate a formal disciplinary hearing. The outcome may be immediate dismissal.


Employee Assistance and Alcohol/Drug Rehabilitation Programs

The employee's decision to seek prior assistance from rehabilitation programs will not be used as the basis for disciplinary action and will not be used against the employee in any disciplinary proceeding and the company will strongly encourage employees who suspect they may have a problem to seek assistance. On the other hand, using the programs will not prevent disciplinary action when facts showing a violation of this policy are obtained.

Grounds for Termination/Discipline

Statement of Confidentiality

The company and drug and alcohol rehabilitation professional bodies and their agents who receive or have access to information concerning drug tests shall keep all information confidential. Release of such information under any other circumstances shall be solely pursuant to a written consent form signed voluntarily by the person tested, except where such release is compelled by a hearing officer or a court or where deemed appropriate by a professional or occupational licensing board in a related disciplinary proceeding.



[Signed for and on behalf of the company]

T Wilcock – Group Safety, Health and Environment Manager